

# Cuba Visas Racket Here Preys On Lonely Exiles

## Personal Service Veep Charged With Grand Larceny

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Reporter of The Miami News

A lonely Cuban exile woman scraped together \$500 by scrubbing floors and taking in ironing in Miami to bring her family here from their Communist homeland.

Another refugee paid out more than \$1,000 over a period of six months to get a Mexican transit visa for her husband.

Still another woman, living on federal relief here, borrowed \$300 from a relative to get her husband and nephew out of Cuba.

In these cases, as in hundreds of others, the visas were false.

Mrs. Rosa Diaz, of 45 NE 9th St., was one of those cheated out of hard-saved money for worthless visas by the Personal Service Bureau, of 1867 W. Flagler St.

"After working months to get the \$500, the Personal Service people gave me the visas," she said.

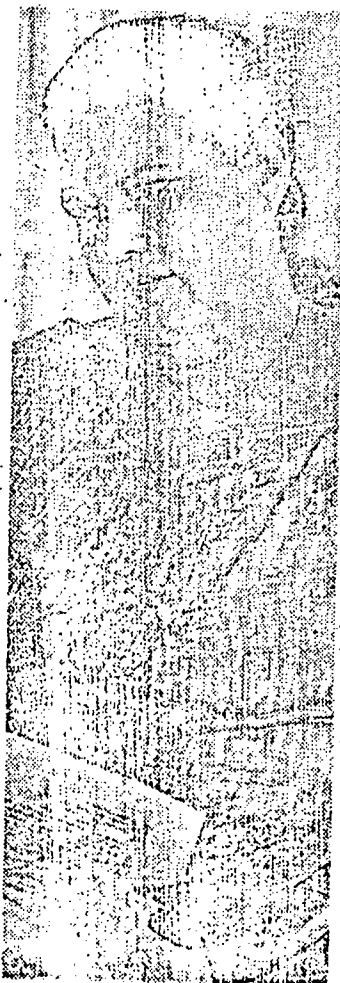
"Yet when I sent them to my daughter in Havana, Mexican consular officials told her they were false."

Charged Friday with grand larceny by the state attorney's office was Robert Ricart, vice president of the Personal Service Bureau he operated with Rafael Loreto Castaneda.

The bureau came to the attention of the state attorney's office two months ago for "continuing misleading advertising" in relation to the visas.

Later, two visas bearing the same number, but different names, were discovered.

And while the list of exiles cheated out of



Miami News Photo by Fraser Hale

Mrs. Rosa Diaz

money grows daily in testimony compiled by Assistant State Attorney Morton E. Perry, the bureau shut up shop.

When irate refugees went to demand bonafide visas or their money back 10 days ago, they found the Personal Service Bureau padlocked and the furniture gone.

Earlier, exiles said a Latin wearing a gun — and a uniform which apparently made them think he was a policeman — stood inside the office and warned them off, according to testimony given to the state attorney.

The bureau's traffic in visas, purportedly signed by a top-ranking Mexican official, touched off an extensive probe that stretches from here to New York and from Mexico to Jamaica.

The visa probe led to the detention and questioning in Mexico of eight persons, including Wendell N. Rollason, head of the Inter-American Affairs Commission here.

Although Rollason's private agency handled exile requests for Mexican transit visas, it was not connected with the Personal Service Bureau. And numerous top ranking government officials have worked for Rollason.

Meanwhile, the Mexican consulate here advised refugees desiring transit visas for relatives that the permits were issued free of charge by the ministry of government.

Rafael Reyes Spindola, Mexican consul here, said preference would be given those hoping to bring out immediate family members.

"Only 200 visas are issued a week, due to transportation limitations on the Havana - Mexico flights," he said. "Names of visa holders will